

Thomas Farm Community Center Sustainable Features



The Thomas Farm Community Center was designed and constructed using sustainable technology and practices. Sustainable measures and features include:

- During construction of the community center, barriers around the site were maintained to limit vehicle and equipment traffic. This minimized land disturbances to the natural site and preserved trees and native plants throughout construction.
- Concrete paving that absorbs and filters water is used in parking areas and the driveway to minimize harmful storm water runoff. Storm water is filtered through the pervious paving into natural soils on the site thereby eliminating the requirement for a major storm water management system or catchment area.
- A geothermal heating and cooling unit uses the constant temperature of the earth below grade to heat and cool the building. The system is made up of 42 deep wells drilled into the ground that pump water through pipes from the community center into the ground and return it. In the winter, the water is heated by the temperature of the earth and used to heat the community center, while in the summer the water is cooled by the temperature of the earth and used to cool it.
- Exterior building windows are made of insulated, low-E (emissivity) glass that reduces temperature loss and filters the light coming in. The insulated glass also helps keep noise inside the building. The center also features skylights that provide adequate daytime light to eliminate the use of electric lighting.
- Landscaping materials and plants on the site require little watering. Natural vegetation has been left intact where possible and surrounds much of the site.
- A majority of the building materials were obtained from manufacturers and suppliers within 500 miles of the center. This reduced the construction's transportation costs and energy use.
- Plumbing fixtures are high-efficiency and sensor-activated to minimize the amount of water used.
- Material finishes and paints used in the center are water-based, use recycled content and are low-VOC (Volatile Organic Compound) to reduce potential health and environmental effects.